

Message Text

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SUBJ: CHIEF OF MISSION ASSESSMENT - SECURITY ASSISTANCE
FOR ZAIRE FY-76 - 81

REF: STATE 015489

IN MY JUDGMENT, AN INCREASED SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IS AN INDISPENSABLE PART OF OUR OVERALL STRATEGY TO ACHIEVE US OBJECTIVES IN ZAIRE. RECENTLY, THERE HAVE BEEN INDICATIONS THAT PRESIDENT MOBUTU IS DISSATISFIED WITH THE PRESENT LEVEL OF US SECURITY ASSISTANCE. HE HAS STATED RATHER BLUNTLY THAT HE FEELS THE US HAS SERIOUSLY NEGLECTED OVER THE PAST FOUR OR FIVE YEARS A GOOD FRIEND IN NEED. A SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM HAS BEEN AN ESSENTIAL PART OF OUR OFFICIAL PRESENCE IN ZAIRE FROM THE EARLY, TROUBLED DAYS OF THE COUNTRY. IT HAS CONSTITUTED IN MOBUTU'S EYES A TALISMAN OF US FRIENDSHIP FOR ZAIRE SINCE IT WAS TANGIBLE EVIDENCE OF OUR SUPPORT FOR HIS POLICY OF POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY FOR ZAIRE. IN ADDITION, IT HAS PERMITTED US MILITARY AUTHORITIES TO ENJOY PARTICULARLY CLOSE AND FRUITFUL CONTACTS WITH ZAIRIAN ARMY OFFICIALS. (THIS IS IMPORTANT IN AND OF ITSELF

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SINCE THE ARMY IS THE FOUNDATION ON WHICH THE PRESENT

REGIME IS BASED).

2. AS POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC STABILITY HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED, THE PROGRAM HAS UNDERGONE MAJOR REDUCTIONS IN RECENT YEARS AT A TIME WHEN MOBUTU'S PLANS FOR MODERNIZING HIS ARMY HAVE BEGUN TO CRYSTALLIZE, SPURRING HIS INTEREST IN ACQUIRING NEW MATERIEL IN A HURRY. THIS INTEREST IN LARGE AMOUNTS OF NEW MATERIEL STEMS FROM THE GOZ PERCEPTION THAT MODERNIZATION IS REQUIRED TO CREATE A CREDIBLE DETERRENT FORCE AGAINST POSSIBLE EXTERNAL AGGRESSION AND TO INSURE INTERNAL SECURITY. OUR RESPONSES TO MOBUTU'S REPEATED OVERTURES SO FAR HAVE DISAPPOINTED HIM. RECENTLY, HE PRIVATELY CALLED TO OUR ATTENTION PRESS REPORTS OF THE ARRIVAL OF MAJOR SHIPMENTS OF SOVIET ARMS IN NEIGHBORING UGANDA AND URGED US TO HELP HIM COUNTER THIS NEW THREAT. IF THE USG INDICATES A WILLINGNESS TO TANGIBLY ASSIST ZAIRE IN MODERNIZING ITS DEFENSE FORCE THROUGH AN INCREASED SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, MOBUTU MAY BE CONVINCED THAT THE US REMAINS A TRUE FRIEND.

3. THIS IS IMPORTANT SINCE US FIRMS HAVE BEEN AWARDED FAVORABLE TREATMENT IN MAJOR NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCES EXTRACTION PROJECTS (I.E. COPPER, PETROLEUM, URANIUM) AND WE ALSO HAVE VALNERABLE INVESTMENTS OF JUST UNDER \$50 MILLION IN MANUFACTURING AND SERVICE FACILITIES. (FOR A COMPREHENSIVE STATEMENT OF US OBJECTIVES IN ZAIRE AND THE RESOURCES NEEDED TO ACHIEVE THEM, SEE THE EMBASSY'S DRAFT POLICY ANALYSIS AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION SUBMISSION).

4. IN THE PERIOD 1960-67, THE US WAS A MAJOR DONOR OF ECONOMIC AND SECURITY ASSISTANCE IN A SUCCESSFUL EFFORT TO PROVIDE RELIEF AND ACHIEVE POLITICAL STABILITY. AFTER 1967 PROGRAMS IN BOTH AREAS DECLINED SHARPLY AND CONSISTED MAINLY OF LOANS RATHER THAN GRANT AID FOR MATERIEL COUPLED WITH MODES GRANT AID TRAINING PROGRAMS.

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5. IN LATE 1974 PRESIDENT MOBUTU TOLD US PRIVATELY THAT HE HAD DECIDED TO MODERNIZE ZAIRE'S DEFENSE FORCES AND THAT, ALTHOUGH HE HAD HAD OFFERS OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT FROM NORTH KOREA ON CONCESSIONARY TERMS, HE WOULD PREFER TO OBTAIN US MATERIEL. WHILE STRESSING THAT NO INCREASE IN SECURITY ASSISTANCE WAS IMPLIED, WE SENT A MILITARY TECHNICAL ADVISORY TEAM (MTAT) TO ZAIRE TO ASCERTAIN WHAT US EQUIPMENT

MIGHT BE AVAILABLE TO MEET STATED ZAIRIAN REQUIREMENTS FOR DEFENSE AGAINST ZAIRIAN PERCEIVED THREATS. THE REPORT OF THE MTAT IS DUE IN APRIL AND WILL BE THE BASIS FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GOZ ON FUTURE ACQUISITIONS. IN THE MEANTIME, MOBUTU HAS CONCLUDED DEALS WITH THE PRC AND NORTH KOREA FOR SUBSTANTIAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN ZAIRE WHICH WILL INCLUDE THE EQUIPPING AND TRAINING OF DIVISIONAL SIZE UNITS.

6. ZAIRE HAS MADE SOME PROGRESS TOWARDS SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN THE DEFENSE FIELD. O & M COSTS ARE BEING FUNDED BY ZAIRE AND ADDITIONAL PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN MILITARY ADMINISTRATION. ALTHOUGH MOBUTU HAS SPOKEN OF CREATING AN ARMS INDUSTRY IN ZAIRE, THE COUNTRY'S STAGGERING DEVELOPMENT NEEDS COUPLED WITH THE ARMED FORCES MODERNIZATION PROGRAM MEANS THAT HOST COUNTRY TOTAL SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN DEFENSE FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT IS NOT LIKELY TO OCCUR IN THE PROGRAM YEARS.

7. IN ORDER TO PRESERVE OUR CREDIBILITY AS A CLOSE FRIEND OF ZAIRE AND, IN ADDITION, TO MAINTAIN OUR RELATIONS WITH KEY MEMBERS OF THE ZAIRIAN ARMED FORCES (FAZ), WE SHOULD SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE THE LEVEL OF FMS CREDIT FROM THE PRESENT \$3.5 MILLION ANNUALLY OR PROVIDE MORE DOD GUARANTEES TO PERMIT MORE RAPID MODERNIZATION OF EXISTING FORCES AND TO MINIMIZE GOZ DEPENDENCE ON NON-WESTERN SOURCES. AMONG OTHER THINGS, SUCH AN INCREASE WOULD ENABLE ZAIRE TO PURCHASE ADDITIONAL C-130'S WHICH ARE BADLY NEEDED FOR TRANSPORT AND WHICH CAN ALSO BE USED FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND FOR EMERGENCY CIVILIAN RELIEF.

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WE SHOULD ALSO SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE OUR MILITARY TRAINING PROGRAM (US-BASED) FROM THE CURRENT \$300,000 ANNUAL LEVEL. IT IS IN OUR INTEREST TO SEND PROMISING FAZ OFFICERS (I.E. ARMY, NAVY, AIR FORCE) TO THE US FOR TRAINING. PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL CONTACTS THUS ESTABLISHED CAN BE TO OUR LONG-RANGE ADVANTAGE, PARTICULARLY SINCE ANY REGIME CHANGE WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY INVOLVE AN ENHANCED ROLE FOR THE YOUNGER ZAIRIAN OFFICERS.

8. IN ASSESSING EFFECTIVENESS, THE PRIMARY YARTSTICK TO BE APPLIED IS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF OUR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES. RELATED TO THAT IS OUR SUCCESS IN HELPING IMPROVE THE ZAIRIAN ARMED FORCES (FAZ),

PLAGUED AS ALWAYS WITH PROBLEMS OF ORGANIZATION, COMMUNICATIONS, LOGISTICS, MAINTENANCE AND A SHORTAGE OF TRAINED PERSONNEL WHICH PREVENTS IT FROM BECOMING AN EFFECTIVE FIGHTING FORCE. OUR TRAINING PROGRAM HAS BEEN DESIGNED TO PROVIDE PROMISING OFFICERS WITH EXPOSURE TO MODERN MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES IN THE US. OUR FMS PROGRAMS HAVE TRIED TO PROVIDE NEEDED TRANSPORT (C-130'S, JEEHS). HOWEVER, NONE OF THIS ASSISTANCE IN ITSELF CAN BE SAID TO HAVE GIVEN ZAIRE A SIGNIFICANT MILITARY CAPABILITY BEYOND THAT OF MAINTAINING ORDER IN SPECIFIC LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

9. THE REVISED SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM DESCRIBED ABOVE WOULD COMPLEMENT A LARGER AID EFFORT. THE EMBASSY HAS RECOMMENDED, AND THE FOREIGN SERVICE INSPECTORS HAVE STRONGLY ENDORSED, PLANS TO BRING OUR AID EFFORT UP TO THE LEVEL OF \$10-15 MILLION A YEAR, PROVIDED THE GOZ FOLLOWS REASONABLE SELF-HELP POLICIES. SIGNIFICANT PROJECT PROPOSALS--NOT ALL OF WHICH ARE LIKELY TO BE IMPLEMENTED--ARE IN VARIOUS STAGES OF DESIGN IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS: AGRICULTURE, HEALTH AND NUTRITION, FAMILY PLANNING AND WATERWAYS TRANSPORTATION.

10. ON THE ECONOMIC SIDE, US FIRMS HAVE HAD FAVORABLE
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TREATMENT AND GENERALLY HAVE BEEN EXEMPTED FROM AN INTENSIVE NATIONALIZATION PROGRAM. WE HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL STAKE IN MAJOR NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCES EXTRACTION PROJECTS (I.E. COPPER, PETROLEUM, URANIUM). AN INCREASE IN OUR SECURITY AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS WOULD HELP CONVINCE MOBUTU THAT CARE WITH US POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INTERESTS IS A SOUND POLICY FOR HIM.

11. BY VIRTUE OF OUR USAID PROGRAMS, WE PARTICIPATE IN THE IBRD-LED CONSULTATIVE GROUP OF WESTERN AID DONORS (BELGIUM, FRANCE, FRG, JAPAN, CANADA, UNDP, EC). THUS, OUR AID PROGRAMS, THOUGH RELATIVELY SMALL, PERMIT US TO PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE AT THE MEETINGS WHERE INDIVIDUAL DONOR COUNTRIES MESH THEIR EFFORTS WITH GOZ REQUESTS AND THE ACTIVITIES OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE IBRD AND THE UNDP.

12. THE MAJOR ECONOMIC/DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE DONORS ARE THE IBRD, THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, EXIM, THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY AND UNDP MULTILATERALLY, AND BELGIUM, FRANCE, THE FRG AND THE PPC BILATERALLY. BY CARRYING OUT THE KIND OF US PROGRAMS DISCUSSED

ABOVE, WE CAN CONTRIBUTE TO A CONTINUING
WESTERN PRESENCE.

13. ON THE MILITARY SIDE, THE INTERESTED POWERS ARE
BELGIUM, FRANCE, ITALY, CHINA AND NORTH KOREA. THE
BELGIAN PROGRAM HAS BEEN DIMINISHING AND WILL PROBABLY
CONTINUE TO DECLINE. THE SAME IS TRUE OF THE ITALIANS.
(A UK MILITARY ASSISTANCE MISSION RECENTLY FOLDED UP).
FRANCE'S PROGRAM WILL INCREASE AS MIRAGE AIRCRAFT ARE
INTRODUCED. CHINA WILL BOTH SUPPLY THE GOZ ARMS
AND CONTINUE TO TRAIN AND EQUIP FNLA UNITS ON
ZAIRIAN SOIL AT LEAST UNTIL ANGOLA ACHIEVES INDEPEN-
DENCE IN NOVEMBER 1975. NORTH KOREA WILL BE THE BIG
NEW PRESENCE WHEN IT TRAINS AND EQUIPS A ZAIRIAN
DIVISION. THE US SECURITY PROGRAM RECOMMENDED ABOVE
WILL HELP US MAINTAIN A MODEST BUT RESPECTABLE US
MILITARY PRESENCE IN ZAIRE AND NOT ABANDON THE FIELD
COMPLETELY TO THE PRC AND NORTH KOREA.

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